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A
CANDID APPEAL
TO THE
NATION,
UPON THE PRESENT CRISIS,
AND THE RECENT
CHANGE OF MINISTERS.

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CANDID APPEAL,

&c.

AN awful period of suspense and terror is now happily terminated by the recovery of our beloved SOVEREIGN, the father of his people: the sensations it excited are too deeply impressed upon the public mind to stand in need of any attempts on my part to awaken them afresh.

THE projected changes and arrangements in the great offices of State, which pending that distressful crisis were of necessity postponed, have now taken place, and the convalescence of His Majesty has

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been closely followed by the resignation of those ministers, who have for so long a course of time enjoyed his confidence, and conducted the affairs of his government.

A QUESTION of the greatest magnitude, and pregnant with the most extensive and undefineable consequences, is generally understood to have been the motive for their resignation: if it was not the only motive, I believe we may presume to say it was the chief and deciding one. What the project was to have been is very generally known; how far it was to go, and by what mode to have been carried into effect, may be matter of conjecture. To free the Catholics of Ireland from their remaining legal disabilities, and to qualify them to the extent of an equal participation with their fellow subjects, who adhere to the established Church, was the experiment in meditation of those ministers who have the merit of having planned and perfected the Union.

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To effect a measure of this magnitude, encumbered with so many obstructions, and opposed with so much pertinacity, was certainly a work of no slight labour, and if common sacrifices could have purchased conciliation and facility, they were not to be regretted.

THE great majority of the Irish nation in point of numbers being of the Catholic persuasion, their influence and importance could not in reason be overlooked by those, to whom the conduct and arrangement of that momentous business principally belonged, and it is now become manifest that the Catholic party were not backward to make known their wishes, nor the ministers on their part not disposed to give them full attention. As they had already received what might reasonably be considered as a full measure of relief under repeated acts, all passed within the period of the present reign, it should seem as if there was now nothing left for them to ask, but what no servant of the crown could encourage them

them to expect; still it should appear as if they needed something more to quicken their exertions, than the blunted spur of gratitude for favors long enjoyed, and the result seems to put it out of doubt that their natural self-love did not quietly permit their natural modesty to stand in the way of their ambition; having therefore a very clear perception of what remained yet to be given, and only an obscure recollection of what they had already received, they took the liberty to demand the small outstanding balance of complete emancipation, to which demand as there was no other impediment but a case of conscience, they very manfully concluded that an all powerful minister might very safely promise, and they themselves very reasonably expect it.

THE great mass of the western Irish, who instinctively and devoutly understand themselves to be what they were born to be, predestined members of the Catholic Communion, and who without the actual occupancy of a foot of soil

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can record their claims to possession of the whole, were not probably very sensitive to the disabilities of *the Corporation Act*, as it only barred their being elected to offices, from which Nature itself, and the small requisites of reading and writing, had imperiously excluded them; in like manner we may suppose the consideration of the *Test Act* to have been a subject rather too metaphysical to have come within the compass of their studies; and therefore I presume to conclude it was quite sufficient for them to know they were asking for something, and altogether superfluous to inform them what it was. When men are to be acted upon by passion, there seems no room to call in reason. These Gentlemen therefore may be very easily made to resent their disappointment, though it would be extremely difficult to make them comprehend what it is they are disappointed of. The higher orders of their persuasion are however neither dull in perceiving their advantages, nor sluggish in pursuing them. To them the barriers, which the founders

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and amenders of our constitution have planted before the church established, would, like their own stone walls, be in the career of their ambition nothing more than an *easy leap*, whereby to *pluck bright honour, not from the pale-faced moon* perhaps, but certainly from the *pale-faced* heretics.

AND now, if such was to have been the purchase of our Union with Ireland, if this was to have been the price we were to pay for Catholic acquiescence in the measure ; great as the object of it is, I must felicitate my fellow Protestants, on the providence of our forefathers, who to secure posterity against those dangers, they had in their own time experienced, devised and imposed that solemn oath to be for ever taken by every monarch in succession, whereby he binds himself *to maintain, to the utmost of his power, the laws of God, the true profession of the Gospel, and the Protestant reformed religion established by law*, and mark the words,

words, not as it shall be established by law, but as it is. //

UPON the terms of this oath the first king of the House of Hanover mounted the British throne, and under the same obligation the now-reigning sovereign possesses it.

IF His Majesty's late ministers advised, as is generally said, the measure of emancipation in favour of the Irish Catholics, it ought not for a moment to be supposed that they in their consciences could feel the impediment of the coronation oath insurmountable; His Majesty's feelings however did not sympathize with their's; firm in what he held to be his duty, and faithful to what he understood to be the spirit of his oath, he planted himself before the barriers of the constitution, and having conscientiously taken his post, determined to maintain it.

THIS notable question has already been very freely and warmly canvassed. Mr. John Reeves, a well-known and well-rewarded political writer, has published his opinion in very strong terms, and directly in the teeth of his former friends; nobody can doubt but that it is his true opinion.

MR. Charles Butler on the other hand, a gentleman eminent in his profession as a lawyer, and justly very high in character for talents and integrity, has given the world a publication, very short as a pamphlet, but quite long enough as a Papal Bull, by which he anathematizes all opinions, like that of Mr. Reeves, as *absurd in the extreme, unconstitutional, and perhaps even treasonable*. This may possibly be thought a strong decision in a doubtful case, but it is the religious opinion of a good Catholic, and Mr. Butler assures us, in the words of Mr. Burke, *that the sanction of two such men, as Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox, will frown wicked opinions*

nions out of the country : Another great authority also has been quoted by Mr. Butler in support of his assertions, namely that of Doctor Franklin ; but some, not quite so learned, but to the full as well affected to this country, may venture to question that authority. The *wicked opinions*, which Mr. Butler with the help of his *frowners* is to *frown out of the country*, are no doubt the heretical opinions of all wicked Protestants, and when they are once fairly put to flight, and the *frowners* in full chace, I will venture to predict the good titular bishop of Waterford shall be in *at the death*.

To be serious—when opinions are divided, as they seem to be in the case of His Majesty's coronation oath, the interpretation of Him, who takes the oath, not the reasonings of those, who talk about it, must and ought to govern the conscience of the taker. What His Majesty's conscience dictated for the relief of his Irish Catholic subjects heretofore, that no doubt he did when the acts of 1778,

1782, and 1793 received the royal assent; but though this may be a good reason why the Catholics should be contented with what they have got, I cannot quite agree with Mr. Butler that it is any reason why the King should be obliged to give them more. We may humbly conceive it could not be very pleasant to His Majesty to oppose the councils of his ministers, it has ever been his chief delight to gratify the wishes of his subjects, there must have been some consideration therefore of no slight moment, that influenced his judgement for opposing them: when we recollect his solemn obligation *to maintain the Protestant reformed religion established by law*, we cannot fail to discover what that prevalent consideration most probably was.

THAT His Majesty so thought and so determined I believe every true friend to the established church will in his heart rejoice, and unless his interest can suggest to a man some reasons personal and peculiar, why he should regret the over-
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throw of the ministry more than that of the religion he professes, I should conceive there cannot be two opinions amongst Protestants upon the case in question. It is one thing to rejoice at the change merely as a change of men; another thing to be reconciled to it, and even to rejoice at it, as a change of measures; for by them we must be ruled, and according to them in the result we must make up our opinions.

If the barriers of our constitution are to fall down upon the word of a minister, as the walls of Jericho at the trumpets of the priests, what do we profit by the pre-eminence of that minister, and the miraculous powers of his unexampled eloquence? If even *virtue* is accurst, *when it undoes its country*, such eloquence may be reprobated with less violence of expression. If I cannot withhold my admiration from talents so superior, I will not suffer my confidence to go with it—*That* I will reserve to bestow upon the honest man, and he alone shall have it.

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IF I could bring myself to treat the question as some men do, who never looking for danger to religion, never see danger, I would leave the measure to its policy only. If I did this, I should be in a great majority: a general relaxation of morals, a levity of manner in discoursing of things serious, and a cold indifference towards the interests of religion, is the lamentable characteristic of the time we live in. It can give a man no alarm, if only that is in danger, upon which he puts no value: secure that he cannot lose what he has not got—

Cantabit vacuus.

MEN of this cast live merrily with men of all casts, who share in their dissipation and subscribe to their amusements; they laugh a man to naught, who makes the religious, or anti-religious, opinions of their companions an objection to their society; there is but one species of non-conformity, which they would quarrel with, and that respects neither religion nor morality; he that sits at their table, may

swagger in their senate, for any thing they care about it.—But what are these, that we should listen to their frivolous opinions, or concern ourselves about their contemptible indifference?

BUT declamation is a finer thing than dulness, by more than half, and high-sounding words, though they carry no sense, ought to be respected for the noise they make in our ears. Now there are many gentlemen in this great world, whose liberality of sentiment is extremely loud; it is also full as much like patriotism, as *Pistol's pig worts at the pridge*, which Fluellen heard, were like courage—"Let us unite," they cry, "every subject of the empire in our common cause!"—'Tis great, 'tis glorious—'tis granted, and they immediately proceed to point us out the means. "Away with all distinctions between man and man! The common enemy is at our door; let us not be found disputing about religion, when he that invades us, has renounced it altogether."—Excellent reasoning, if the rule
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of his conduct ought to be the model for our's: forward as they can wish us to be for the promotion of unanimity, we only beg leave to doubt if complete emancipation of all non-conformists would be the ready road to it; what they assert we do not deny, but what they infer we are not ready to grant. These gentlemen, who handle a question without understanding it, are indeed less insignificant, but considerably more troublesome than those, who neither give the pains to comprehend it, nor think it worth their while to talk about it: Unless both descriptions of men could be made sensible, what a pity it is only one of them is silent.

BUT there are men of more profundity, who take the question as a matter of calculation, and, having found out that nineteen parts in twenty of the property of Ireland is in the hands of the Protestants, would persuade us to think lightly of the risque of Catholic emancipation, inasmuch as *property is to govern representation*, and then where is the danger? To
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this we might answer, that the danger is in their very statement of the case. If their computation of comparative property is near the truth, and our computation of comparative numbers is not far from the truth, the very inference, that puts them at their ease as to consequences, is in our view of it the very circumstance most seriously to be apprehended. When nineteen parts in twenty as to number possess only one part in twenty as to property, and both parties are admitted to equal rights of office and administration, and that poor unbeneficed majority is composed of Roman Catholics, where is the man bold enough to underwrite the tranquillity of either church or state? Were I sure, that by holding them at their present distance I should make them my enemies, despairing, as I do, to make them my friends by admitting them into partnership, as a Protestant I would prefer to stand the consequences of open hostility, rather than incur the dangers of pretended friendship.

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AND now, without dwelling any longer on the premises, we come to the fact in point, which no man will contradict, viz. —That his Majesty's service has been given up by a part of his cabinet counsellors, who having held their offices through the course of a most arduous struggle, have now retired from their situations, leaving them to be filled by such successors as His Majesty in the constitutional exercise of his authority might think proper to appoint.

UNFORTUNATELY before they could return the badges of their offices into the hands of their Sovereign, that Sovereign, dear at all times to his people, but now doubly so as the guardian of their religion and defender of their constitution, was no longer in capacity to receive them; under the visitation of an alarming illness, the father of his country was in the hand of his God, and at the point of rendering up his agitated spirit. When the pilot was stricken down, and the
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storm was raging, it was then no time to shift the crew ; the vessel hung suspended on the waves, and neither these, who would have come to her relief, could approach to take the charge of her, nor could those, who were about to relinquish it, execute their intentions.

BLESSED be God for his vouchsafement, the life, for whose preservation so many prayers were offered up, is not lost ; and the constitution, shaken but yet saved, assailed but not overthrown, is now entrusted to the charge of those, who commit themselves to the candor of their fellow subjects, for whose service they renounce tranquillity ; not forcing their way into power by the engine of party, not talking themselves into consequence by parliamentary rhapsodies, but dutifully standing forth at the call of their King in the most dangerous of all moments, and most difficult of all trials, they appeal to their integrity as their only safeguard, and to their patriotism as their only motive.

PATRIOTISM may be treated as a mockery by those, who take their measure of mankind in the mass; Dedicators may ascribe it to their patrons, and counterfeits may assume it to themselves; but the man, who sacrifices the most respectable situation in the state, and quits the *chair* he filled with every man's consent and good opinion, and in which he reposed with dignity, comfort, and reputation, if he be neither a madman or a fool, must be a patriot.

WHAT is there then, which this man, or any like this man, has to fear from the people of this nation? When he puts himself for their sake into the post of danger, assured as he may be of their candor and support, he will find it converted into the post of safety. Let him act straight forward for the good of his country, and the acquittal of his conscience, what has he to apprehend from opposition? They may pelt him, but it will be with roses; they may think to crush him in his outset by their weight,

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but they will find to their disappointment that so far from having added a feather to his burden, they have buoyed him up in the stream of popularity with bladders of their own blowing, instead of sinking him in his struggles by accumulated pressure.

LET him, and all connected with him, recollect that strong words will not ultimately support weak causes, and plain-speaking will serve all the purposes of fair dealing. It will not be in the power of all the eloquence upon earth to reconcile to the approbation of honest men opposition-measures of mere vexation and embarrassment, hatched for party purposes, and which occasions do not make, but which are made for occasions. All the world knows what kind of an inheritance it is, to which the present ministers have succeeded.

EVERY man feels the distresses of the time; every man can see the ravages of that torrent, which has overwhelmed the nations;

nations; but the ways of Providence are past finding out, and terrible as the dispensation is, it must be met with fortitude; complaint cannot cure it, cowardice cannot escape it. Not ten years are past since our country was the envy of the world; a people, that sets the favor of Heaven at defiance, has by the favor of Heaven held so triumphant a career of victory, as to terrify the nations, and arm the whole strength of Europe against us.—Behold, I conjure you, brave and generous Britons, your single spot of earth, the seat of arts and sciences, the asylum of the stranger and the persecuted, now left a solitary fragment amidst the wreck of empires, the last surviving beacon, that gives light and hope to the beholder, when all besides is universal darkness and despair. Can you conceive it is not now the time to join in its defence? Can you refuse to second their exertions, who throw themselves on your candor, and, confiding in your support, obey the call of their King to rally round his throne? Let no idle rumours de-
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ceive you that they are ministers *pro tempore*—water-galls to a rainbow, that the next gleam of sunshine will call up again to stretch its lofty arch across the vault of heaven.—No, they have no other master but their King, no other duties, but those, which they are truly purposed to fulfil towards him and towards their country. New in their stations, and unpracticed in the labours they succeed to, if before they can set to work to save the bottom they have embarked upon, they must resolutely turn up all hands to beat off those, who, regardless of their distress, and insensible to every manly feeling, are only watchful to make plunder of the wreck, be it so! I trust that for the honor of the country there will be found few for the attack, and many for the defence.

AND now let *the state of the nation* be brought under review when it may, and let those, who set it forth, throw it into whatever dark and gloomy shades their despondency, or even their disingenuity may

may think fit to employ, yet let not them be foisted into the groupe, who have no right to appear upon the canvals; rather let us hope the sombrous composition will allow one ray of light to chear us, where the navy of England may be seen triumphant on the seas, and these our new-appointed guardians of the state giving and accepting in return the *olive branch of peace*; so will it be at once the crown of all their hopes, and the completion of all their labours—

—*Ex fumo dare lucem.*

